

# **ABSTRACT**

Blocks of audio information are arranged in groups that share encoding control parameters to reduce the amount of side information needed to convey the control parameters in an encoded signal. The configuration of groups that reduces the distortion of the encoded audio information may be determined by any of several techniques that search for an optimal or near optimal solution. The techniques include an exhaustive search, a fast optimal search and a greed merge, which allow the search technique to tradeoff the reduction in distortion against the bit rate of the encoded signal and/or the computational complexity of the search technique.